



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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NEWS RELEASE

Patrick L. Meehan, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, today announced the filing of an information¹ charging Fernando Mercado with conspiracy to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine and possession with intent to distribute pound and multiple pound quantities of methamphetamine. The information alleges that from 2005 to September 18, 2006, Fernando Mercado agreed to acquire pound and multiple pound quantities of methamphetamine, from Rogelio Ortega, charged elsewhere, who was the head of the Ortega Drug Trafficking Organization ("Ortega DTO") based in Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania, for distribution and sale in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere. It is further charged that during the conspiracy Rogelio Ortega, Victor Ortega, Rolando Martes-Ortega and other persons acting under their direction delivered pound to multiple pound quantities of methamphetamine to Mercado at various locations in rural Chester County, Pennsylvania, including West Grove, Nottingham and Toughkenamon, on credit, with the agreement that Mercado would pay the Ortega Drug Trafficking Organization between \$17,000 to \$20,000 per pound supplied. The information alleges that Mercado received a total of approximately 6 pounds of methamphetamine from the Ortega Drug Trafficking Organization, in four separate one and two pound deliveries that occurred on October 31, 2005, from November 23 to November 24, 2005, December 17, 2005 and July 11, 2006. The information also seeks criminal forfeiture of drug proceeds and facilitating property, including \$65,120 in cash seized on September 18, 2006.

If convicted of the offense charged, the defendant face the following maximum penalties: life imprisonment, a mandatory minimum term of 10 years imprisonment, lifetime supervised release, at least 5 years supervised release, a fine of \$16,000,000 and a special assessment of \$500.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Joseph T. Labrum, III and K.T. Newton.

¹An Indictment or Information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANT

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE
Fernando Mercado	West Grove, Pennsylvania	age 33

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